

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (previously presented): A method for the production of sheets or tiles in agglomerate material including products comprising of marble and/or granite and/or sand and/or quartz powders and binding resins, comprising the steps of:

- crushing of the components of the sheets or tiles;
- mixing of these components with the aforesaid binding resins;
- pouring these components inside a pressing die;
- pressing and compacting these components; and

hardening, at a predetermined pressure and temperature, in order to obtain a predetermined shape, advantageously quadrangular, and predetermined dimensions of these sheets or tiles, wherein before or during the pouring stage, a metal plate is positioned inside the pressing die, said metal plate having a structure comprising a series of cavities suitable for receiving the mixture of the components which, during the polymerisation and hardening stages, bond to said plate thus forming a single object with said sheet or tile.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the metal plate is obtained by die-pressing or rolling.

Claim 3 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, further comprising:

smoothing and polishing of at least one of the upper and/or lower surfaces of these sheets or tiles; and

cutting to size, chamfering, gauging and flaring of these sheets or tiles.

Claim 4 (withdrawn): A sheet or tile made from an agglomerated material including a mixture of products comprising marble and/or granite and/or sand and/or quartz powders and binding resins, wherein an inner or base portion of said sheet or tile is constituted by a metal plate having a structure comprising a series of cavities and protuberances receiving the said mixture of products and such as to allow, during the polymerisation and hardening of the mixture, the bonding of the plate which thus forms a single object with the sheet or tile.

Claim 5 (withdrawn): The sheet or tile of claim 4, in which the metal plate is made from aluminum.

Claim 6 (withdrawn): The sheet or tile of claim 4, wherein the metal plate comprises of a plurality of cavities and/or of protuberances designed to facilitate the adherence of the mixture to the plate.

Claim 7 (withdrawn): The sheet or tile of claim 4, wherein the metal plate forms the base of the sheet or tile.

Claim 8 (withdrawn): The sheet or tile of claim 4, wherein the metal plate is embedded in the sheet or tile.

Claim 9 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the agglomerate material further comprises inclusions of elements made from metal, glass, ceramic, wood, or precious stones.

Claim 10 (withdrawn): The sheet of claim 4, wherein the agglomerate material further comprises inclusions of elements made from metal, glass, ceramic, wood, or precious stones.